



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

memory, accompanied by the uneasy feeling that the remaining doubt in his regard had not yet been settled. M. J. BERTRAND, Perpetual Secretary of the Paris Academy of Sciences, has lately taken a review of the whole of WRONSKI'S work,* and makes it very clear that he was neither genius nor charlatan, but simply insane. "His madness explains his charlatanism, excuses his imposture, and permits one to believe in the presence of genius imprisoned in insanity." After reading M. BERTRAND'S paper, few will doubt his conclusions. E. S. H.

PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM CRANCH BOND (DIRECTOR OF THE HARVARD COLLEGE OBSERVATORY, 1840-1859).

The portrait of Professor W. C. BOND given in this number is reproduced from a photograph of the oil painting now in the Harvard College Observatory. It forms one of the illustrations of a life of BOND,† which will shortly be printed; and is presented to the A. S. P. by the undersigned.

EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

MT. HAMILTON, February 28, 1897.

METEOR OF JANUARY 24, 1897 (LOS ANGELES).

LOS ANGELES, Cal., March 5, 1897.

Professor HOLDEN,

Lick Observatory, Mt. Hamilton, Cal.

Dear Sir:—On January 24th, at about 3:15 P.M., I observed a very large meteor, which passed over this place and, as near as I am able to judge, in a direction nearly due east. Unfortunately, I did not note the exact time of its appearance, and am not able to state the time positively, though from other circumstances, I am able to locate it as being about the time mentioned above. The meteor was visible sufficiently long for me to make a good observation of it. Its movement was, as before stated, nearly due east. Its apparent height was about thirty degrees above the horizon when first observed. At its disappearance it was approximately twenty-three degrees to twenty-five degrees above the horizon. Its color was a dazzling white, with a faint tinge of

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Vol. 139, p. 588.

† Memorials of WILLIAM CRANCH BOND, Director of the Harvard College Observatory, 1840-59, and of GEORGE PHILLIPS BOND, Director of the Harvard College Observatory, 1859-65, by EDWARD S. HOLDEN.

blue. No train of smoke or fire followed, excepting a sheet of flame, giving the meteorite an elongated appearance. I should be pleased if you would forward me any notices you may have from other sources where this meteor has been observed, and greatly oblige,

Yours very truly,

S. J. REESE.

MR. LOWELL'S OBSERVATIONS OF *MERCURY* AND *VENUS*.

The *Monthly Notices* of the Royal Astronomical Society for January, 1897, contains plates of drawings of *Mercury* and *Venus*, made by Mr. LOWELL at the Flagstaff Observatory in 1896. The markings on *Mercury* were "at once conspicuous" with the new twenty-four-inch object-glass; those on *Venus* are "perfectly distinct and unmistakable." The undersigned has made a considerable number of observations of *Mercury* in the years 1873-1885, and a very large number of *Venus* in the years 1873-1890, with telescopes of six, sixteen, twenty-six, thirty-six inches in aperture, without ever once seeing markings of the character depicted by Mr. LOWELL. Other markings of the class drawn by SCHIAPARELLI and many other observers, have, on the other hand, been seen and recorded whenever the conditions of vision were good. I have no hesitation in saying that such markings as are shown by Mr. LOWELL did not exist on *Venus* before 1890. It is my opinion that they do not now exist on the planet, but that they are illusions of some sort. Their general character* is what would be shown if the adjusting screws of an objective were set up too tightly, producing a set of strains in the glass, or if the objective were strained by its cell. Strains of this sort will produce faint companions to stars sufficiently bright. A comparison of all the drawings of *Venus* available in the library of the Lick Observatory is very instructive. All observers, except those at Flagstaff, see faint markings of one class; while those drawn by Mr. LOWELL are of a totally different nature.

Venus has been observed on very many occasions at Mt. Hamilton, with our essentially perfect twelve-inch object-glass, in the years 1888-1897, without once seeing markings of the kind drawn by Mr. LOWELL, or "distinct" markings of any kind. Faint and indistinct markings, of the character of those drawn by scores of observers for a century past, are, however, seen when the circumstances are good.

* Six or more radial rays, thicker at the outer rim of the image of the planet.